

**From:** NC Policy Watch [info@ncpolicywatch.com]  
**Sent:** 9/15/2017 9:51:55 AM  
**To:** Stallard, Lorea A [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=742fa809a86c430383d6707ebab07599-lastallard]  
**Subject:** In supporting the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, a struggling nonprofit confronts a conflict of interest

# NC POLICY WATCH

Stories & voices  
that **matter.**

## In supporting the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, a struggling nonprofit confronts a conflict of interest

By [Lisa Sorg](#)

For the 18 months, Gary Brown has been traveling through northeastern North Carolina like an itinerant preacher, singing the praises of the [Atlantic Coast Pipeline](#).

"Atlantic's decision to place its operations center in Northampton County is impressive and certainly welcomed," he told the Roanoke-Chowan *Herald* in March 2016. "The project is critically important in serving the energy needs of residents, business and industry in the state and region, present and future. We appreciate the opportunity to be a part of that, and the trust they have placed in us."

At public hearings in Jackson and Rocky Mount, Brown urged state environmental officials to approve the ACP's water quality certification application, claiming the project would create jobs.

One could argue that as the executive director of the [Northampton County Economic Development Commission](#) for the past 25 years, Brown was simply doing his job: trying to attract industry to an economically depressed part of the state.

But while promoting the controversial project, Brown failed to disclose an important conflict of interest: He is the board president of a nonprofit that made the short list of grant recipients of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline Foundation.

According to documents reviewed by Policy Watch, in 2016, Brown's nonprofit, the [North Carolina Center for Automotive Research](#), was being considered for a \$5,000 grant for "site logistics, safety and program support."

The center touts itself as a place for engineers to test vehicles, but is essentially a race track for cars and motorcycles. Yet the proposed grant amount put the center on financial par with three community- and education-oriented nonprofits: The Garysburg Volunteer Public Library, the Lake Gaston Community Center and the Gaston College Prep-KIPP, all of which were also under consideration to receive \$5,000.

The foundation is funded by the pipeline's owners: Dominion Energy, Duke Energy, Piedmont Natural Gas and Southern Company Gas. It has been awarding community investment grants to nonprofits and other groups along the pipeline route.

Such funding strategies are a common, albeit contentious practice for many industries. While the awardees financially benefit in the short-term, the corporate giving can also be viewed as a method of dampening opposition and buying support. [[Read more...](#)]

## **Progressive Pulse Blog:**

- [Legislature creates school funding task force, but appears unwilling and unable to seriously examine NC's school funding needs](#)
- [New data: Despite small gains, far too many people in poverty still left behind](#)
- [Greensboro Police again face charges of profiling, brutality](#)
- [U.S. House okays gift to predatory payday lenders; only one NC Republican votes "no"](#)
- [Free speech controversy brewing at Elon University](#)
- [National fair courts group: Trump nominee for NC federal vacancy should be rejected](#)
- [Author of book on tragic Hamlet chicken plant fire to speak at September 26 luncheon](#)

## **Daily Radio Commentary:**

- [Lack of transparency shrouds special session](#)

## **Daily News:**

- **Lawmakers, White House squabble over immigrants**  
[Raleigh News & Observer](#)
- **Mark Meadows: Freedom Caucus is working 'very closely' with White House to write DACA legislation**  
[Asheville Citizen Times](#)
- **Mixed messages on DACA cause frustration, fear**  
[Journalnow.com](#)
- **Deal or no deal? 'Dreamers' wait as Trump, lawmakers joust**  
[Raleigh News & Observer](#)
- **Some worry politics dictating UNC system board's actions**  
[WRAL.com](#)
- **UNC Board of Governors aims for change at universities**  
[Raleigh News & Observer](#)
- **Judges delay giving NC school superintendent Mark Johnson control over schools**  
[Raleigh News & Observer](#)
- **Folwell opposition waves yellow flag on Bowman Gray Stadium sale**  
[Journalnow.com](#)
- **Winners, losers in UNC Health deal with Carolinas HealthCare**  
[Raleigh News & Observer](#)
- **GenX testing will start Friday in Cumberland, Bladen counties**  
[Wilmington Star News](#)
- **NC professor wins \$250,000 national prize**  
[Raleigh News & Observer](#)
- **Lone black candidate for Asheville mayor, suspends campaign**  
[Asheville Citizen Times](#)
- **Could the former Philip Morris site in Concord draw Toyota/Mazda or Amazon?**  
[Charlotte Observer](#)
- **Census figures: Poverty remains a roadblock in N.C.**  
[Greensboro.com](#)
- **ERA supporters work for support on N Carolina campuses**  
[WRAL.com](#)

## **Daily Editorials:**

- **The Board of Governors undercuts UNC's integrity, independence**  
[Raleigh News & Observer](#)
- **Legislature needs to end governing by whim, decree and ambush**  
[WRAL.com](#)

- Budget cuts unfair  
[Journalnow.com](#)
- Medicare for All? First, some big questions  
[Charlotte Observer](#)
- Fair redistricting is fundamental to voting rights  
[Raleigh News & Observer](#)
- Trump's voter fraud commission makes fraudulent claims of its own  
[Raleigh News & Observer](#)
- Another fumble in the Lafayette saga  
[The Fayetteville Observer](#)
- The elite universities  
[Greensboro.com](#)

Our work is supported by readers like you.

[Help us to continue expanding](#) our aggressive reporting and thoughtful commentaries. [Make a tax-deductible financial contribution today!](#)

**Donate**

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter: To get regular updates from NC Policy Watch, you can now follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Join the policy debate at [The Progressive Pulse blog](#).

---

NC Policy Watch is a project of [the North Carolina Justice Center](#).  
© 2016 NC Policy Watch | 224 S. Dawson Street, Raleigh, NC 27601

You are receiving this email because you signed up online or at an in-person event with NC Policy Watch or the NC Justice Center. You may also be receiving this email because you registered to attend one of our events. To stop receiving this email, simply [click here to unsubscribe](#) or [here to manage your subscription](#).

empowered by  salsa